



# Healthy Futures

## Are you a Good Corporate Citizen?

*'Good corporate citizenship is critical to the future of the NHS, and it is vital that NHS Boards and Chief Executives take ownership of it. This model allows you to assess where you are as an organisation, so that you can play your part in making the NHS more sustainable.'*

**David Nicholson**, NHS Chief Executive

### Take the test

Good corporate citizenship describes how NHS organisations can embrace sustainable development and tackle health inequalities through their day to day activities: how they develop their workforce, purchase goods and services, organise travel, manage their land and resources, and how they design, construct and run their buildings. Acting as a good corporate citizen makes good business sense and can help your organisation achieve a wide range of benefits – including saving money.

The Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model is an online tool to help NHS organisations assess their progress on sustainable development, find inspiration and share ideas. The tool includes:

- ✓ A self assessment test to monitor your organisation's progress on sustainable development
- ✓ Guidance on how to develop good corporate citizenship in your organisation
- ✓ Case studies, resources and a networking forum

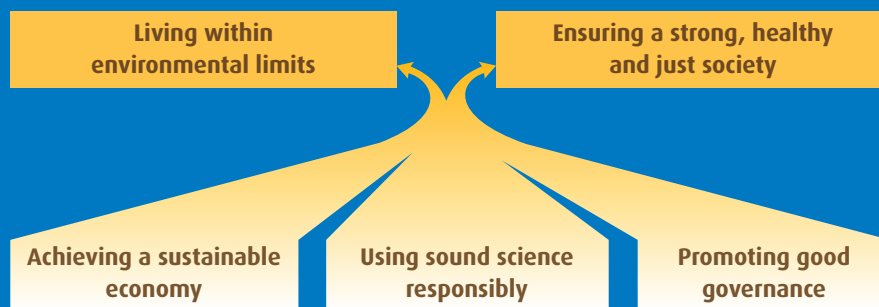
[www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk](http://www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk)



Sustainable  
Development Commission

# What is good corporate citizenship?

Good corporate citizenship refers to the way in which NHS organisations can embrace sustainable development and promote health. It was a priority identified in *Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier* (2004). It follows the five principles of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, *Securing the Future* (2005):



Good corporate citizenship means embedding these five principles into all areas of your organisation's business and operations.

## Why the NHS?

The NHS and good corporate citizenship share a common goal: health and wellbeing for the whole population. With an annual budget of over £100 billion and the largest property portfolio in Europe, the NHS spends £20 billion a year on products and services, consumes over £410 million worth of energy every year and accounts for 5% of all road traffic in England. How the NHS behaves – as an employer, purchaser, manager of transport, energy, waste and water, as a landholder and commissioner of building work and as an influential partner in many communities – can make a huge difference to health and sustainable development in the UK.

## What's in it for my organisation?

Good corporate citizenship can help NHS organisations produce the kind of transformational change they need to provide more efficient, sustainable, high quality health services that promote good health.

Acting as a good corporate citizen makes good business sense for NHS organisations, because it helps to lower costs, improve quality and enhance reputation:

- Reducing costs – with fuel costs rising and budgets under strain, reductions in energy, water or waste bills will be welcomed by all NHS organisations
- Improving quality – making decisions that benefit the local community, economy and environment in the long term, can help prevent ill health. This can reduce demands arising from avoidable illness and so free up funds to improve the quality of treatment and care for unavoidable illness.
- Enhancing reputation – good corporate citizenship doesn't go unnoticed and can enhance the reputation of NHS organisations in the communities they serve, as well as at a national level.

The Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model can help you assess your organisation's progress in six key areas: travel, procurement, facilities management, buildings, workforce, and community engagement.



## Travel

NHS travel policies influence the behaviour of millions of people every day – not only the 1.4 million people who work for the NHS, but the vast numbers of patients, visitors and suppliers who flow in and out of the system. Good corporate citizenship means discouraging unnecessary journeys for freight as well as people, and encouraging active, sustainable travel such as walking and cycling. This helps to reduce accidents, noise, pollution, congestion and carbon emissions, and promotes good health.

### Benefits

- Helps tackle obesity, heart disease and mental health issues
- Reduces health risks and costs associated with accidents and pollution.



## Procurement

Through its £20 billion annual procurement budget, the NHS can drive innovation and shift markets towards more sustainable and efficient modes of operation. Good corporate citizenship means seeking out innovative products and services, basing decisions on whole life cost, and setting high environmental and social standards throughout the procurement process. It means managing demand, reducing waste and minimising transportation.

### Benefits

- Reduces costs and carbon emissions
- Contributes to a strong, sustainable economy.

## Community Engagement

NHS organisations can help local people make informed decisions, enabling them to live healthy, sustainable lifestyles. By working with local authorities and other public services (such as schools and transport planners), they can promote healthy, sustainable outcomes more efficiently. And they can demonstrate leadership through the example they set to others in areas like food, active travel and energy efficiency.

### Benefits

- More effective service development and delivery – based on evidence of local needs
- Empowers the local community to adopt healthier, more sustainable lifestyles.



## Buildings

With the largest property portfolio in Europe, decisions about the planning, design and construction of new buildings, and the refurbishment of existing ones, are important opportunities for the NHS to contribute to health and wellbeing, and to a more sustainable NHS. Good corporate citizenship means maximising sustainability through all stages of a building's lifetime, using renewable materials and sources of energy, designing for zero carbon consumption, and using buildings to contribute to community cohesion and strong local economies, e.g. by providing facilities beyond healthcare.

### Benefits

- Promotes good health and tackles health inequalities by supporting local communities
- Ensures that buildings are resilient to the risks of climate change.

## Facilities Management

The good management of NHS facilities plays a key role in contributing to safe, high quality care delivered by the NHS. Good corporate citizenship involves making efficient use of resources such as energy and water, minimising waste and protecting green space and biodiversity, while supporting their local economies and communities.

### Benefits

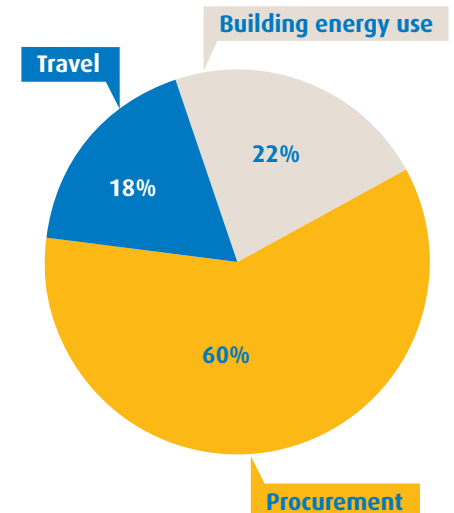
- Saves money and reduces carbon emissions
- Green space can help reduce patient recovery times and improve health.

## The NHS and climate change

The NHS currently has the biggest carbon footprint in the public sector and contributes more than 3% of England's total carbon emissions. Climate change has been identified by leading experts as the greatest threat to human health of the 21st century. As the organisation charged with protecting the nation's health, the NHS has a duty to act.

The NHS Sustainable Development Unit published *Saving Carbon, Improving Health: NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy for England* (2009) in response to the need to take action on climate change. This sets out how the NHS carbon footprint is made up and how it can be reduced. It recommends registering with the Good Corporate Citizenship model and taking the self-assessment test as a key step in tackling carbon reduction.

### The NHS carbon footprint



## Moving from treatment to prevention

Over time, good corporate citizenship can help prevent illness and reduce health inequalities, reducing demand for treatment, and freeing up funds that can be invested in providing high quality care.

For example, by encouraging active travel in organisational and local planning, NHS organisations can simultaneously reduce carbon emissions and tackle lifestyle diseases such as obesity. And by helping local people into work, NHS organisations can save money that would otherwise be spent treating the wide range of health problems related to unemployment.

By acting as a good corporate citizen, your organisation can help the NHS move from treatment to prevention, and develop as a more sustainable health system.



## Workforce

Employment is a key determinant of health. NHS organisations can make a big difference to the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve through their approach to recruitment, learning and skills development, management, career progression, working conditions and equal opportunities. They can also promote sustainable development through the learning opportunities they provide, and the example they set.

### Benefits

- Improves the health of the local community and tackles health inequalities
- Improves productivity by creating a healthier, sustainable workforce.

*'I'd like to see all NHS organisations demonstrating leadership on sustainable development by signing up to the Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model, and taking the test.'*

Will Day, SDC Chair

# Good corporate citizenship – helping you to deliver

Acting as a good corporate citizen can help your organisation deliver in many key areas of business, including:

- Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention – good corporate citizenship can help cut costs, improve efficiency and move towards prevention
- World Class Commissioning – good corporate citizenship provides a strategic framework for effective commissioning in the long term, considering whole life costs and the wider determinants of health
- Carbon Reduction Commitment – taking the Good Corporate Citizenship test is a key step in helping to reduce NHS carbon emissions
- Tackling health inequalities – good corporate citizenship means addressing the broader factors that contribute to health, such as employment, community cohesion, and a safe, healthy environment
- Tackling lifestyle diseases – good corporate citizenship means encouraging and supporting healthy, sustainable food choices, activity, and access to green space
- Care Closer to Home – good corporate citizenship means thinking creatively about providing quality patient care and services in ways that minimise carbon emissions from motorised transport.

## How to become a Good Corporate Citizen

- Register with the Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model and take the self-assessment test.
- Nominate a Board-level sustainable development champion to spearhead sustainable development in your organisation.
- Develop a Board-level sustainable development management plan, incorporating the six key elements of the Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model, and a Board-level carbon management plan.
- Raise awareness and change behaviour – develop an internal and external communications strategy to encourage behaviour change.

### Case study

In the first year of an initiative to reduce its environmental impact, **Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust** has trained over 1400 staff in energy and environmental efficiency, increased domestic waste recycling from 4% to over 60%, reduced energy consumption by 3%, and saved over £150,000 by diverting waste from landfill and by generating income from waste metal.

### Case study

**Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** is one of the largest travel generators in Cambridgeshire, with nearly 40,000 trips made to and from the campus every day. 'Access to Addenbrookes – a travel plan' promotes low carbon, active travel. Since its application in 1993, the Trust has increased the number of staff walking to work from 4% to 11%, cycling from 17% to 28% and travel by public transport from 4% to 22%.

### Case study

**South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare Foundation Trust** diverts 200 tonnes of domestic waste from landfill every year, saving £200,000 annually through minimised waste transportation and disposal costs. It has cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by almost 50% over 5 years, and now sources 26% of its electrical energy from renewables.

## Useful resources

You can search for useful information and resources to help your organisation become a Good Corporate Citizen by going to [www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk](http://www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk) and selecting 'Resources'. A selection of useful resources is listed here:

**Physical activity and the environment** – NICE guidance on the promotion and creation of physical environments that support increased levels of physical activity. <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH8>

**Procuring for Health and Sustainability 2012: Sustainable Procurement Action Plan** – sets out how the health and social care sector can use sustainable procurement to achieve improved health and well-being. [www.pasa.nhs.uk](http://www.pasa.nhs.uk)

**Saving Carbon, Improving Health: NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy for England** [www.sdu.nhs.uk](http://www.sdu.nhs.uk)

**NHS Constitution** – one of its key principles relates to fair, sustainable use of finite resources, and it contains four pledges on workforce. [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NHSConstitution/index.htm](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NHSConstitution/index.htm)

**BREEAM Healthcare** – sets the standard for best practice in sustainable design. [www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org)

**BREEAM Communities** – helps planners and developers improve, measure and independently certify the sustainability of development proposals at the planning stage. [www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org)

This publication forms part of a series exploring how the NHS can contribute to, and benefit from, sustainable development.

The Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model was produced by the Sustainable Development Commission in 2006 with funding from the Department of Health, and later revised in 2009 in cooperation with the NHS Sustainable Development Unit. If you have any questions about the Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model, please e-mail [gcc@sd-commission.org.uk](mailto:gcc@sd-commission.org.uk)

The Sustainable Development Commission's Healthy Futures project, funded by the Department of Health, helps the NHS to maximise its contribution to the health of individuals, communities and the environment. For more information visit [www.sd-commission.org.uk/health](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/health).